

JIM McDERMOTT

7th District, Washington

Last updated, January 27, 2004

Congressman Jim McDermott's Biography

Jim McDermott was born in Chicago, IL on December 28, 1936. He was th

e first member of his family to attend college, then went on to finish medical school. After completing his medical residency and military service, he served in the Washington State House of Representatives from 1970 to 1972 and in the Washington State Senate from 1975 to 1987.



In 1987, after 15 years of legislative service, Rep. McDermott decided to leave politics and continue in public service as a Foreign Service medical officer based in Zaire, providing psychiatric services to Foreign Service, AID, and Peace Corps personnel in sub-Saharan Africa. When the 7th district Congressional seat later became open, he returned from Africa to run for the U.S. House of Representatives. He was elected in 1988 to the 101st Congress and is currently serving his 8th term.

A physician, Rep. McDermott is especially interested in health care issues. While in the state legislature, he developed the Washington Basic Health Plan, the first state program in the country to provide low-cost health insurance to the unemployed and working poor. In Congress, he is active in health care reform issues. He founded and chairs the Congressional Task Force on International HIV/AIDS and introduced the AIDS Housing Opportunities Act, a new program enacted into law in 1990 that provides funds for special housing assistance for people with AIDS. Rep. McDermott, the co-author of National Health Care legislation, is leading the fight in the House of Representatives to guarantee all Americans comprehensive health care coverage.

Rep. McDermott is married and has two adult children. He attends St. Mark's Episcopal Cathedral in Seattle.